

POOR LEGIBILITY

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SDMS# 88206833

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

INTRAOFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

SFUND RECORDS CTR
3737-90536

DATE: August 18, 1960

H0019

TO: Willis A. Evans - Fisheries Management Supervisor - Region 3

FROM: H. E. Pintler - Pollution Biologist III - Region 3

SUBJECT: Pollution - United Heckathorn - Contra Costa County - Fish Kill

A visit was made to the subject company on Wednesday, June 22, 1960, as a result of a report of dead fish by Wardens Kemp and Victim.

The United Heckathorn Company is located on the east side of Lauritzen Canal, an offshoot of the Santa Fe Channel, just off Cutting Boulevard, Richmond, approximately opposite the south end of Fourth Street. In talking with the plant representative, Mr. E. G. Trimpey, it was learned that the company has been at this location for over twelve years. The plant does not manufacture basic insecticides but receive them, processes them and mixes them with solvents, emulsifiers, wetting agents or other carriers to improve application and then packages them. Besides several domestic waste discharges which go into Lauritzen Canal, the company also discharges a certain amount of wash water which has been pre-settled to remove as much of the insecticides as possible. This latter action is undertaken for the sake of economy rather than to protect the receiving water. At the time of this visit an overflow from the tanks was going directly into the canal. The size of the stream was about the diameter of a lead pencil and the liquid was whitish. Besides this discharge, there was some slight evidence of leakage from the tanks. Along the wharf opposite the approximate point where this discharge enters the water, there was a milky streak heading toward the closed end of the canal. It appeared similar to the water in Upper Blue Lake, Lake County, when the DDD emulsion was introduced to control the Clear Lake gnat. In addition, there was an oily sheen on the water and considerable brown flocculent material in suspension in the upper foot or so of the water. The pipe leading into the settling tanks was equipped with a valve which would permit diverting the waste directly to the canal instead of to the tanks.

An inspection of the shore end of the canal revealed 48 striped bass ranging from about 12 to 18 inches in length. All appeared to have been dead for a considerable time. Most were tangled in the oily debris in the northwest corner of the canal, although two were seen opposite the northern end of the Rhodes and Jamieson, Ltd. plant.

Warden Victim reported that the Rhodes and Jamieson plant had a tank

of the receiving water had been submitted to the Sanitation Laboratory, State Department of Public Health for analysis for insecticides. No report of the results has been received yet.

It was further learned from Mr. Trimpey that the Regional Water Pollution Control Board No. 2 had requested the company to submit a completed WPC Form 2 which is a precursor to the setting of discharge requirements by the Board. Mr. Trimpey also volunteered to cooperate in any necessary way to prevent possible harm to fish and aquatic life. He further stated that because of the low volume of waste, he thought it might be possible to evaporate the waste and dispose of the residue on land, and that the bulk of their work was with DDT. In addition, there is the possibility that all the company's waste may be accepted by the City of Richmond sewer system, pending the City's decision as to what level of quality it is willing to take in.

Recommendations

It is recommended that some time be spent securing additional samples of the waste and of the receiving water, as well as fish specimens for additional analysis. It will be especially important to try to obtain live fish in the area to submit for analysis of the acetylcholinesterase (ACLE) level in their brains as a measure of the presence of organic phosphorus insecticides and the possible degree of effect upon the fish.

It is also recommended that the company be advised to cease discharge and find other means of disposal of the waste.

When we are invited to submit comments and recommendations to the Pollution Board, we should recommend elimination of all industrial waste from the plant and encourage connection with the City of Richmond sewage system. The latter would apply principally to the domestic wastes. The industrial wastes, especially the insecticides, should still be disposed of on land.

H E P
Herbert E. Pintler
Pollution Bioanalyst III
Region 3

cc: Kemp

HEP:vg